

Dr. Morgentaler defended

Freedom of choice is a woman's right

By ROSEMARY McCracken
"Women must unite to protect their freedom of choice" was the slogan of the conference on women sponsored by the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS) and hosted by the University of Toronto, October 26-28.

The conference featured a lecture on "The Roots of Women's Oppression," a rally in defense of Dr. Morgentaler, workshops on individual

areas of women's oppression, and a panel discussion with 7 speakers.

Women's rights to freedom of choice were defended in the rally for Dr. Henry Morgentaler, a Montreal physician charged with 13 counts of performing or conspiring to perform abortions. Dr. Morgentaler has publicly condemned the abortion law.

Committees in defence of Dr. Morgentaler have been formed across

the country. Efforts to gain support for Dr. Morgentaler's defence have taken the form of public demonstrations, rallies, pickets and radio and television talk shows.

Saturday was devoted to encouraging students to return to their campuses to organize for Dr. Morgentaler. The meeting stressed that student women have an added advantage—they have their campus facilities with which to organize.

Students were told this is a matter of civil rights: the right "to talk about and fight outdated, repressive laws."

The rally ended with a march on city hall.

Several motions passed after the Sunday workshops similarly echoed the theme of the right of women to freedom of choice. Besides almost unanimous support for the repeal of all sections of the criminal code dealing with abortion, women demanded unlimited access to free abortion and birth control methods.

Women also demanded a repeal of all anti-homosexual legislation in Canada. A motion was passed demanding that information about human sexuality or sexual preference be freely available in high schools. The conference moved to oppose streaming in public or secondary schools by sex, race, class or sexual preference.

Linda Jenness, 1972 U.S. presidential candidate for the Socialist Workers Party, defined the roots of women's oppression as the capitalist system which is based on stratifying people, using women as the bottom layer economically. "Women want socialism. They want society to provide equally for each of its members," she said.

The Spartacist Bolshevik League denounced "feminism" as a "sex-versus-sex" struggle which undermines the more important class struggle, and "thus delays the advent both of communism and of the ultimate liberation of women".

Aline Gregory from "Women for Political Action" maintained that women are oppressed by all men, not only a particular class. All women are part of a working class for men. "Don't think joining a male-dominated party will help things".

According to Jenness, "there is something for everyone to do, even if you still think the present system can be patched up. Struggle for accessible abortion, day care, women's courses, and freedom from sexism in education and advertising".

Yearly income of \$3000

EDMONTON (CUP)
Undergraduate and graduate students should receive a guaranteed annual income of \$3,000 per year.

This was one of the many proposals to come out of the National Union of Students (NUS) semi-annual policy conference held here on the weekend of October 20.

The union also decided to revamp their conference voting system. They will now adopt a "one university, one vote" position instead of the old system under which a university would get one vote for every 5,000 students enrolled.

The NUS feels that the burden of paying university bills should be lifted from the students' shoulders.

The \$3,000 would be paid by the federal government, and would not include additional income.

NUS wants grant/loan proportions of student aid to be the same across the country.

The NUS proposal said every student "has a right to an adequate standard of living."

The NUS membership fee is 30 cents per student. The larger universities will now pay more than the smaller institutions but will have the same voting power.

"It is pretty implicit in our system of democracy today that he who pays the piper calls the tune," said University of Alberta delegate Gary Croxton in opposing the change.

University of Toronto delegate Bob Anderson, in support of the new policy, said that it will allay the fears of many institutions considering joining the NUS.

NUS delegates at the conference also established a standing committee on women to investigate accessibility to post-secondary educational institutions.

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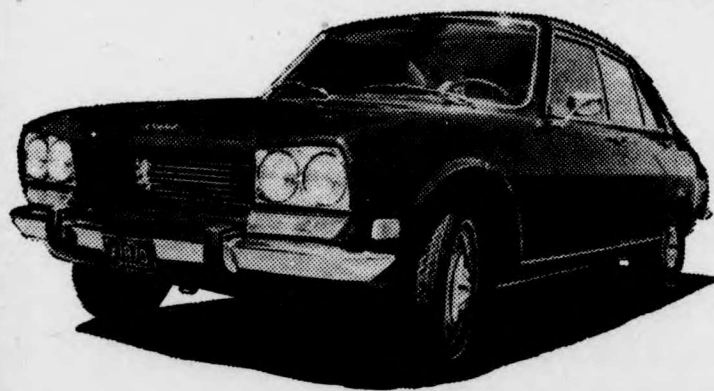
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